**Yoga Teacher Training at the Ashram**

Periodically in life windows of opportunity arise which, if followed, can catalyse a deepening of one’s understanding and inner growth. If you have the inspiration to teach, embarking on a yoga teacher training course is one such opportunity; one that can create a spark which ongoing practice and study can nurture into a shining inner fire that is characteristic of a more fulfilling, joyful and skillful way of life.

The Yoga Teacher Training Course (YTTC) at Mandala Yoga Ashram offers a 2-year professional training, over fourteen residential retreats, that is fully compatible with the needs and dynamics of 21st century western yoga classes. It offers an authentic training that is rooted in the timeless teachings of yoga and the generation-old ashram tradition that is flourishing in the hills of south-west Wales. Swami Nishchalananda is the Ashram’s Spiritual Director and his periodic input brings a unique depth and richness to the course. Swami Krishnapremananda will be directing the course alongside an experienced team of tutors –Nick Edge, Maha Sattwa, Dr Hania Kramlund, Debbie Farrar and Rebecca Allen – all with their own different areas of yogic expertise and energies.

The Yoga Teacher Training Course is designed to awaken, nurture and refine the teaching capacities of each participant. Such awakening is based on a firm foundation and commitment to ongoing personal yoga practice. The steady assimilation of the practices in our personal experience enables us to become clear channels through which the teachings can be effectively conveyed to others.

**Pre-requisites:**

Firstly, an aspiration to embrace all that the course brings as a means to deepening your growth and development. Your aspiration to teach may arise from several reasons, perhaps from gratitude for all you have received from your teachers; from seeing the value of teaching in terms of your own growth and transformation; from a need to augment your career and income; from a sense of service to all those who would benefit from effective yoga teaching; or for no other reason than that you are inwardly ‘called’ to embrace it at this particular time.

Secondly, you will need to have time and space in your life into which the practices, learning and assimilation of the course can comfortably fit. If you are already juggling too many balls in your daily life, maybe this is not the right time. Perhaps you need to let go of something to create more space; this reflects the deeper knowing that by letting go of those things or attitudes which no longer serve our growth, we open to new ways of being and doing.

Finally, all participants will need a reasonable level of emotional stability and a willingness to welcome a period of change. One thing is sure; the course will catalyze transformation on an inner level and often also in the circumstances of your external life. Challenges will arrive without doubt. How we face such challenges, using them as fuel along our way, is one of the hallmarks of the inner path. Everyone, students and tutors alike, will face such challenges at some time or another. If we embrace these challenges, they become the soil in which our spiritual life grows… cleansing the dross of the egoic mind, revealing previously hidden inner resources and enabling us to be ever more transparent to Truth.

This aspiration for Truth lies at the heart of the course and the ashram experience. The course will comprise:

* direct experience of almost all the main paths of yoga, both theoretically and from personal practice
* a deepening of your understanding of the effects of hatha yoga practices, from your own personal experience and under expert guidance
* karma yoga (working with awareness), in which you will delve into both the theory and practice in and around the Ashram
* teaching tools and methods, which will include lesson plans, course plans and all aspects of teaching yoga professionally
* group chanting (mantra yoga)
* guided meditations
* ongoing assessment over 2 years, beginning with small micro-teaching groups and building up to full classes both within the Ashram and outside
* cleansing techniques (*shat karmas)* of hatha yoga – guided instructions on the key practices
* periodic Ashram events, including Guru Purnima (festival in which one pays respects to the spiritual teacher), the teaching input of visiting teachers and swamis, *havan* (fire ceremony), together with all day *mandala* construction and *japa anusthana* (mantra repetition)
* *mouna* (periods of silence)
* together with lots of laughter, fun and heartfelt sharing

Through it all you will make new and abiding friends, discover new capacities within yourself, open up to new discoveries and ways of being, taste the joy of realising that you can do something which previously felt beyond you, and gradually awaken to a more truthful and authentic sense of Self.